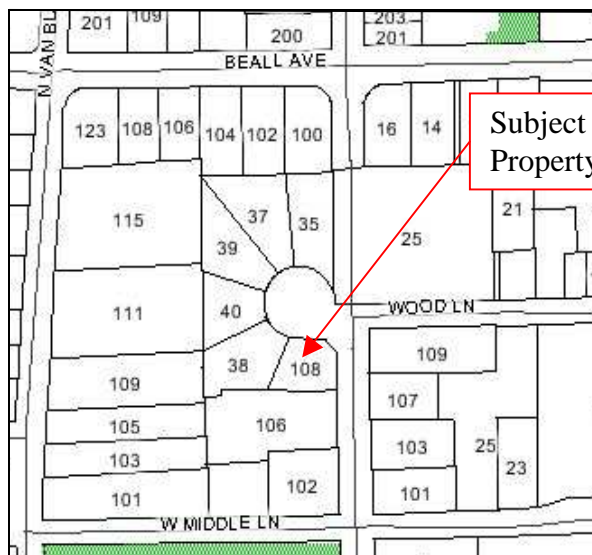


**CITY OF ROCKVILLE  
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
STAFF REPORT**

**For  
February 18, 2010 Meeting No. 02-2010**

**APPLICATION:** HDC2010-00489  
**ADDRESS:** 108 N. Adams Street  
**ACCEPTED:** February 1, 2010  
**45-DAY LIMIT:** March 25, 2010  
**OWNERS:** Robert and Colleen Corbey  
**REQUEST:** Rear and side addition  
**STAFF:** Robin D. Ziek



**REQUEST SUMMARY:** The proposed project is for a side and rear addition to a two-story single family house. Part of the addition is one-story and part is two-story. The total added living area is 1230 sf.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends approval of the rear and side addition with two Conditions, and the Findings incorporated into the draft motion below.

**DRAFT MOTION OF APPROVAL:**

I recommend approval with the following Conditions and Findings:

- Conditions:
1. The HardiPlank clapboard shall have a smooth “wood” finish.
  2. The existing windows proposed for removal shall be evaluated for repair and incorporated into the project to retain associated historic materials on site.

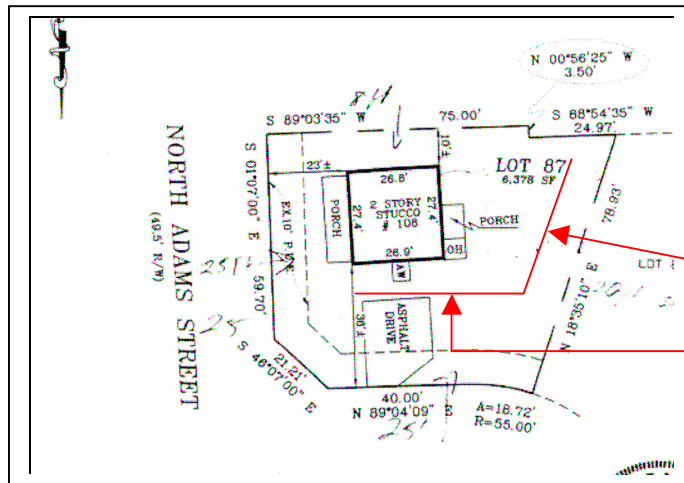
Findings: Finding HDC2010-00489 application for a rear and side addition to be in keeping with the Technical Guide for New Additions and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standard #2 and #9; that there is differentiation between the old and new construction with materials while maintaining compatibility of massing, scale and design; that the new construction could be removed in the future without damage to the integrity of the historic resource; and that the proposed addition is in accordance with HDC comments made at the prior Courtesy Review.

**Previous Requests:**

HDC 2000-00172 Tree removal and replacement of basement door  
 BLD 2000-04664 Walls under original block poured concrete and install new slab  
 Courtesy Review HDC meeting March 20, 2008 for massing concepts for addition

**Property Area:** 6,390 sf  
**Structure Area:** 1,458 sf  
**Zone:** R-60 HD

**City of Rockville Permits Required:** Building permit



Development Standards/ R-60  
 Maximum lot coverage is 35%  
 Height not to exceed 35'  
 Rear setback 20'  
 Front setback 25'

**BACKGROUND**

Significance: The house at the corner of North Adams Street and Wood Lane is a side-gable side-hall/parlor house with a fullwidth front porch. It is included in the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District, and is also a Contributing Resource in the West Montgomery Avenue National Register Historic District. Although the current configuration of the house dates from 1928, the rear half of the house was, reportedly, part of the late-19<sup>th</sup> century Peter/ Muth house located next door. This rear section consists of a two room two-story structure with rear entry porch.



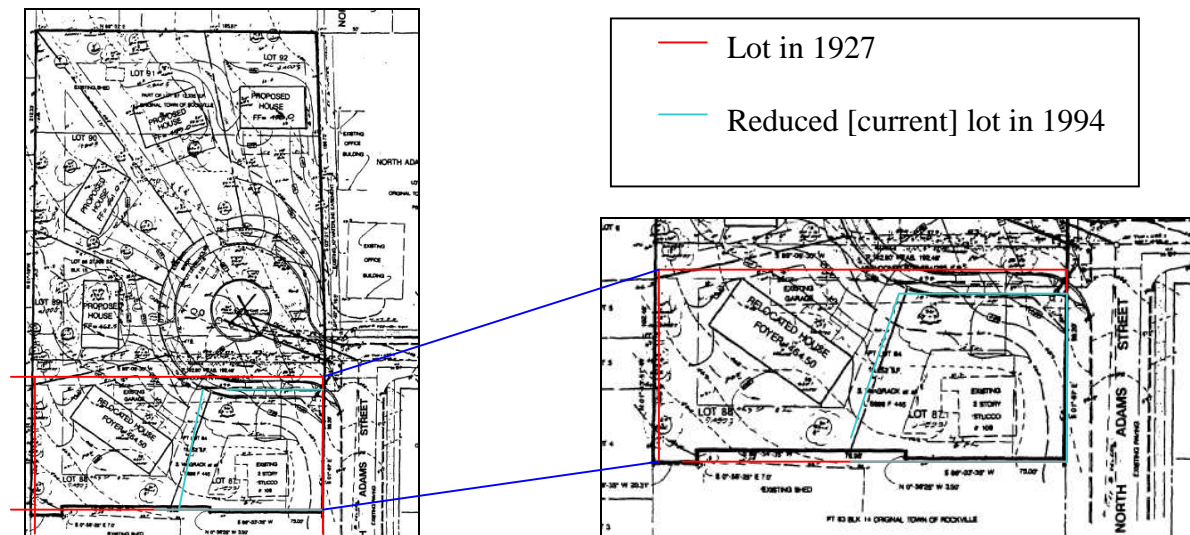
108 N. Adams, façade



Façade and south elevation

According to the MHT form, this rear section was moved 20 feet north to a new lot in 1928 and, a new front section, consisting of an additional two rooms and fullwidth front porch, was added onto the moved structure. The front section's interior window and door surrounds, along with room-length pine floorboards, suggest this was also part of an earlier structure. The house was then covered with a stucco finish to unify the two halves [3/20/08 staff report].

In 1994 the property was subdivided to accommodate a relocated house and 4 new houses along the new Wood Lane cul-de-sac. The resulting Lot 87 for the subject property has two street frontages and an angled rear lot line.



More recent alterations to the property can be documented with comparison to the description provided in the MHT form, which suggests the rear (west) porch is the oldest exterior element of the house. This one-story porch runs  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the length of the house and the north end is enclosed to form an entry vestibule. The balusters are described in the MHT Survey Form (M:26/10/12) as “jig-sawn wood in a Victorian pattern.” The existing balustrade is modern dimensional lumber with no evidence of a jigsaw pattern. The MHT form also references a “small wood frame garage with front gable roof located north and west of the house”. This structure was demolished in 1994 as part of the Wood Lane cul-de-sac development.

The HDC held a Courtesy Review of the location, massing and scale of a proposed addition in 2008 (see Meeting Minutes, Circle 11-12). The HDC made several recommendations, and was encouraging about proceeding to design development for a COA. An assumption of the Courtesy Review was removal of the rear porch to accommodate the new addition.



Rear porch on west elevation



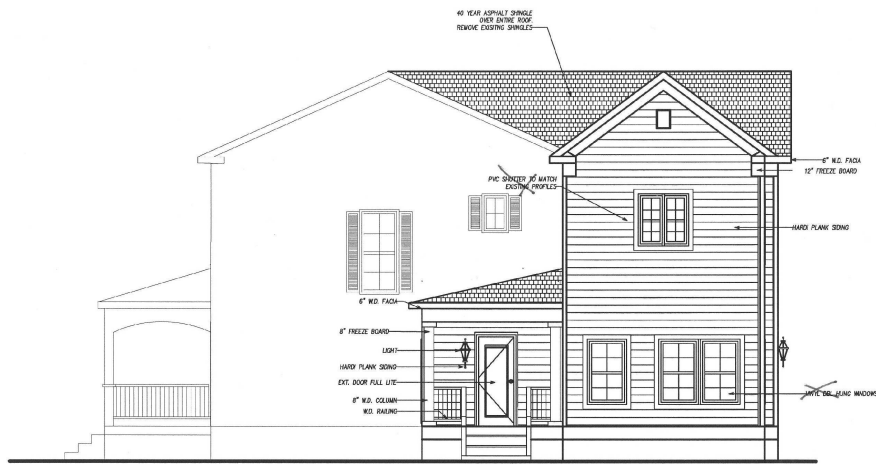
North and west elevation

**DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT and MATERIALS:**

Design: The rear addition extends 15'-8" out from the rear wall of the house, and 10'-0" to the north as a side addition. The footprint provides an additional 680 sf to the house, which currently has a footprint of ca. 760 sf. The second floor addition will provide ca. 550 sf, as part of the proposed new work is only one story.

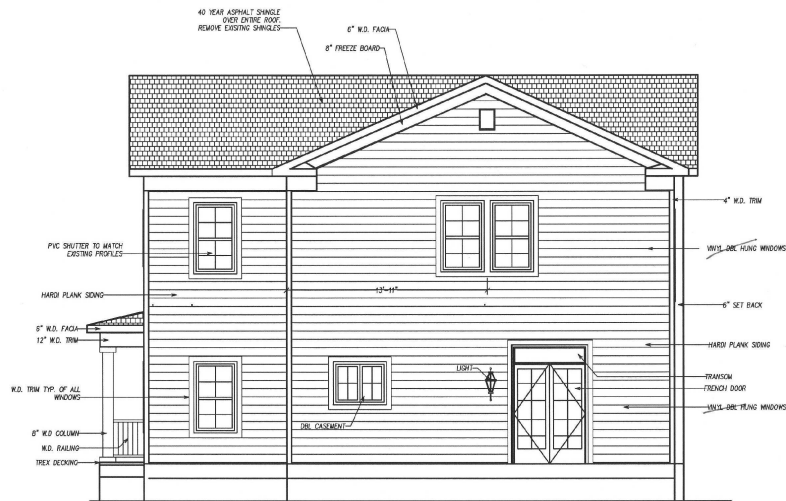


PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION (E)  
SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



PROPOSED LEFT SIDE ELEVATION (W)

SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION (W)

SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

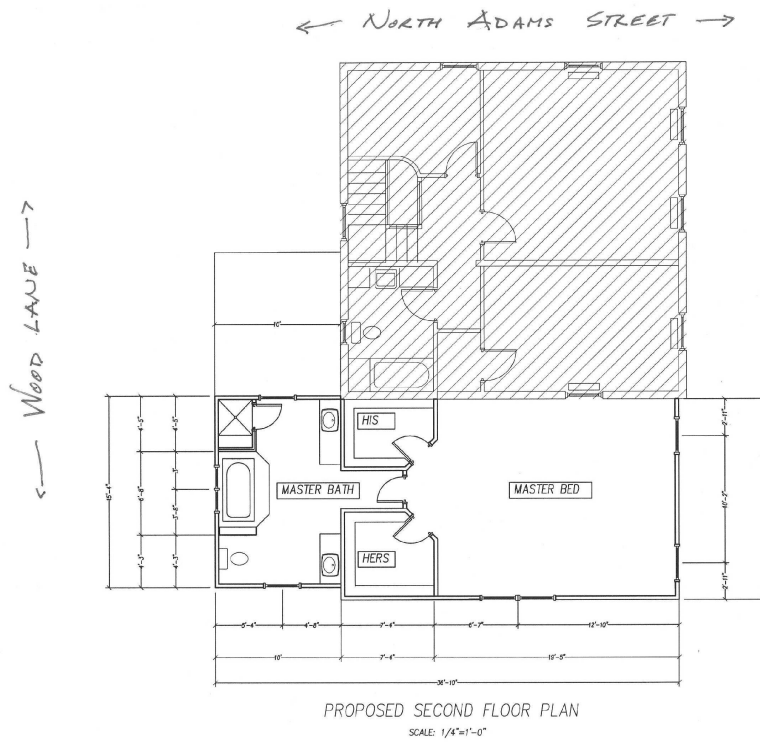
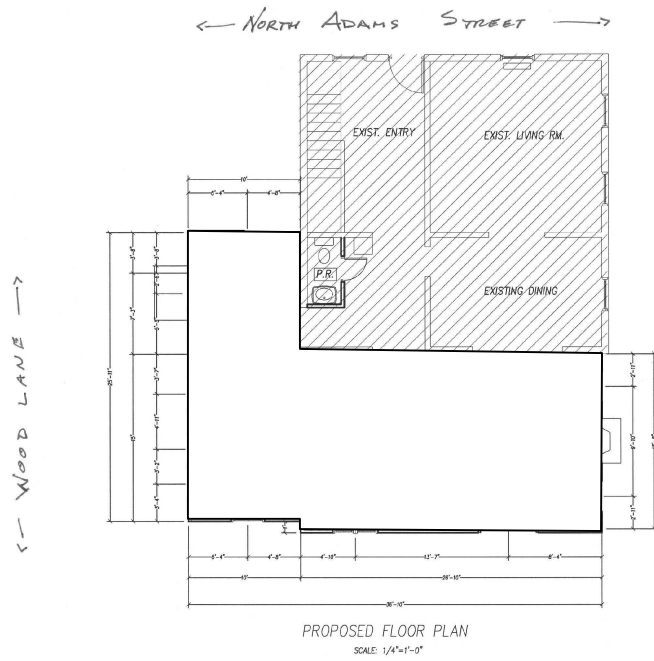




**Height:** The proposed addition matches the height of the existing house (ca. 27'), and staff recommends approval of this based on design development of the addition. The proposed design presents small scale aspects of the addition to the public street so that the existing house will continue to dominate one's view of the house and property. Staff notes then-Staff Winstel recommended at the Courtesy Review that the new addition should be lower than the height of the existing house. At that time, the HDC reviewed abstract massing, and the project has now been developed past that. The roof of the historic resource has a shallow pitch, and Staff now recommends approval with the current design that sets the addition at the same ridge height as the existing house.



North and west  
elevations



The proposed addition is held back from the existing southwest corner to more clearly preserve the original massing. In addition, the length of the west elevation of the proposed addition (36'-10") is broken up by stepping in the northwest corner room, providing a smaller scale to the project when viewed from the adjacent properties to the west.

Setbacks: The proposed addition sits within the required setbacks, and the applicant will not have to apply for a Variance, as was discussed at the Courtesy Review.

Materials: The applicant proposes to use HardiPlank for exterior cladding. This cement-fiber board is nailed into place and painted, and looks similar in appearance to wood clapboard if the smooth finish is selected. As the smooth finish replicates new wood, and the "wavy" finish replicates deteriorated wood, the smooth finish is preferred. Use of a painted clapboard material will serve to differentiate the new addition from the existing stucco-clad house. Such a change in material is common with historic properties, and this would not be intrusive in the Historic District.

The new windows are proposed to be Anderson aluminum-clad wood, with simulated true-divided light muntins. The new windows will have similar profiles to the original, but they won't replicate them. This will provide additional differentiation between the old and new. Staff notes that the 2/2 windows of the original house are typical of late 19<sup>th</sup> century windows, and an indication of the early age of the underlying elements of the existing house. The 2/2 configuration reflected advanced window technology, which made possible large panes of glass to provide more light inside the building. Staff has concerns with the proposed removal of a 2/2 window on the west elevation and a smaller window in the north elevation. These window elements are character-defining elements at this site, providing a link to construction earlier than the 1928 date given for the house.



Full height 2/2 windows on rear (W) elevation

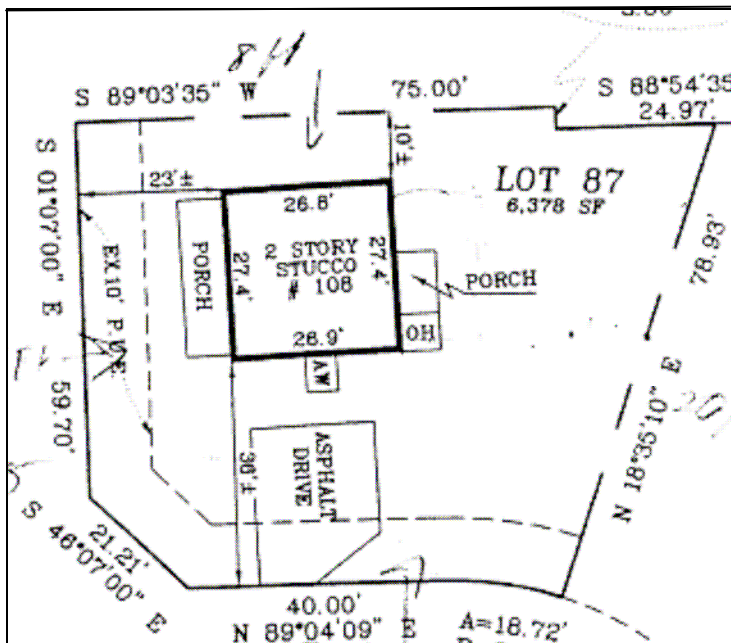
Smaller  
2/2 sash  
on north  
elevation



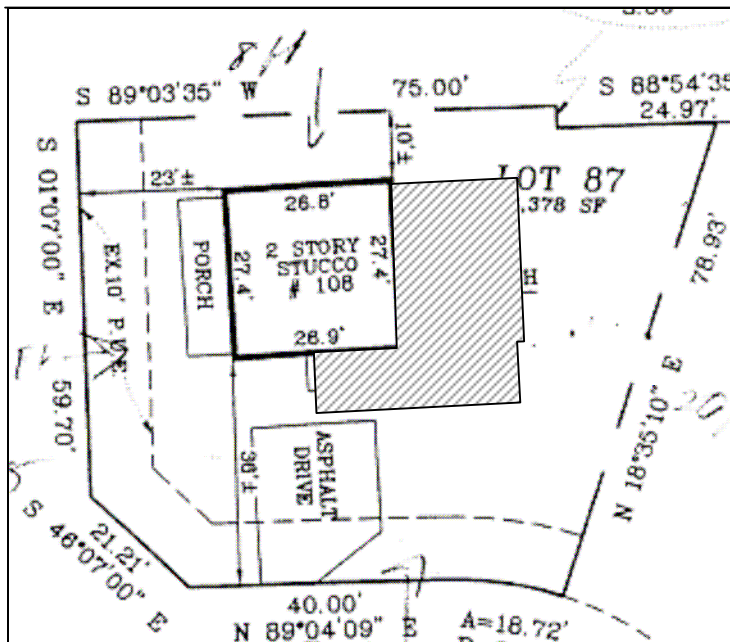
The rear doors are proposed as multi-light French doors with a transom above. This modern feature appears appropriately scaled for this rear elevation.

Lot coverage: The proposed project is well under the maximum lot coverage of 35%, with a proposed 22% lot coverage.





Existing Site Plan

Proposed Site Plan  
[staff drawing]

### COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The Secretary of the Interior presents *Rehabilitation* as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values."

The City of Rockville follows the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation* in recognition of the fact that, for the most part, our historic resources are private homes for active families who provide a public service as good stewards of our historic resources and heritage.

Standard #9, states that: "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment."

The proposed addition is consistent with this Standard. The rear addition will be the same height as the existing house, and is smaller in size. The small scale of the proposed addition is provided by narrow proportions on the North elevation, and stepbacks on the West elevation. The new addition respects the original floor plan, and uses existing hallway, door and window locations to provide the connecting link. The addition is appropriately placed to the rear of the lot, and will not overwhelm the existing scale and massing of adjacent buildings in the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. The HDC has already reviewed and agreed that the removal of the existing rear porch will not constitute damage to the historic integrity of the property as there have already been significant alterations to this porch. The use of a one-story entry room on the north elevation provides a transition between the existing two-story building and the proposed two-story addition.

This proposed addition also complies with the City's Technical Guide for New Additions (# 4), which states: "A new addition should be designed to respect a building's character and to preserve its historic integrity. This generally means using existing rooflines, trim lines, material and massing as a guide for designing the new addition. It is critical that additions do not visually overpower the original building."

The proposed project meets this guideline as well. Staff notes that, by following guidance to use existing doorways and windows as the connection sites between the existing house and the new addition, these elements could become extraneous. However, historic materials are, in general, made from old-growth wood that has inherent properties of durability as a result of the tight wood grain. Typically, these historic elements can easily be repaired and continue to contribute to the historic character of the house. With that in mind, staff recommends that the windows on the north and west elevation should be evaluated and incorporated into this project. This would comply with Rockville's Technical Guide #4; and with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards #2 and 9.

**Historic District Commission Minutes: Meeting No. 03-2008 Thursday, March 20, 2008**

PRESENT: Max van Balgooy, Chair, Janet Hunt McCool, Craig Moloney Anita Neal Powell

## IV A. Courtesy Review

Applicant: Robert and Colleen Corbey

Address: 108 N. Adams Street

Request: Addition to house

Staff Winstel presented the Courtesy Review of the proposed massing and location of an addition to the house. He reviewed the MHT inventory form, which identifies two separate sections to the house: a rear late 19th century moved from the adjacent Peter/ Muth House in 1927; and, the front part of the house which was then added. The building was entirely faced with rough stucco, masking the separate sections behind a common facing. Staff Winstel noted 19th century fabric in the interior of both sections of the house; and that jig-sawn Victorian pattern rear porch balusters (mentioned in the MHT form), have been replaced. The current rear porch is constructed of modern dimensional lumber. The description of the different window trim that indicates the older section does not match the actual location of window being described in the inventory form. The house appears to not have two distinct sections, one clearly 19th century and the other 1927.

The requested addition would extend from the north side elevation out approximately 20' and be 2 stories. This would violate the setback of this corner lot, which actually has two front setbacks. The allowable building area would be limited to 11 feet from the north elevation unless a variance was obtained. The second option would extend from the rear elevation and the side elevation. The rear setback would allow for an 18 feet depth and would not require a variance. Staff recommends consideration of this option noting that the Standards and Technical Guides need to be followed, all necessary City permits need to be obtained, and the addition should involve saving as much historic fabric and using existing openings. Additional considerations include the addition setting back from the façade wall plane and the height being less than that of the core historic structure.

Chair van Balgooy asked property owners Robert and Colleen Corbey to comment on the staff report's accuracy.

Ms. Corbey stated the staff report was accurate and stated that they couldn't build much without a variance. She asked what is involved with the variance application?

Mr. Corbey noted that the interior staircase would remain, which limits interior alterations along the north elevation. He added that he has to apply for a parking permit yearly and would like to have a garage as part of the addition. He added that the large window on the north elevation he believes is original, but not the smaller ones toward the rear of the house. He would like to have the option of considering both the proposed additions in the staff report.

Commissioner Hunt-McCool asked if they investigated the setback limitation of the lot when they purchased the property. The Corbey's replied that they had not, in part, because they purchased this as a rental property.

Mr. Corbey stated that the house currently only has two bedrooms and 1 ½ baths. They want more space for children and family members who often visit. Commissioner Hunt-McCool sympathized with them noting that she too has space limitations in her old house when family visits and also has to apply for a parking permit.

Mr. Corbey stated the street is challenging when it snows due to the snowplow.

Ms. Corbey told the Commission they came for the courtesy review to see if they could do what they wanted before they spend the money on an architect.

Commissioner van Balgooy asked staff how hard it is to get a variance and should they have gone to the Board of Appeals before coming to the HDC.

Staff Winstel stated that he didn't have experience with variance considerations but did think that coming to the HDC first was recommended to make sure the HDC would not deny approval of an addition that the property owner had received a variance to build.

Staff Ziek stated that the property owners should meet with the Board of Appeals staff to discuss applying for a variance.

Commissioner van Balgooy stated that he thinks the zoning code is clear on what is allowed and what is not.

Commissioner Moloney said that it was good to come to the HDC first before the Board of Appeals and recommended the second option asking if they were concerned about retaining their parking pad. Ms. Corbey stated their interest in digging under and building a lower level garage.

Commissioner Moloney commented that archeological resources would then be a consideration. He inquired if they would be happy with Option 2 if they couldn't get the variance, stating that both scenarios are good but 20' on the side elevation would have a greater impact on the historic character of the house. He presumes that this would be a 2-story addition and they would use different material and have a different foundation. The massing, proportion and window openings will need to be complementary with the historic character of the house. If you are seeking the tax credits the state preservation office will have to review and approve the addition.

Ms. Corbey said an addition will be subservient, but they need a bathroom and bedroom. Commissioner Moloney felt that there would be enough room for a study as well.

Mr. Corbey asked about moving the driveway to have a garage under a rear addition. The HDC thought that could work.

Commissioner Hunt McCool noted that a variance application will give their neighbors an opportunity to comment on the project.

Commissioner van Balgooy agreed with Commissioner Moloney that both could be approved and the devil would be in the details.

### **Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation**

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation with Guidelines for Applying the Standards were written in 1976 to assist the long-term preservation of a property's significance through the preservation of historic materials and features. The Standards were updated and expanded in 1983, and again in 1990.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.